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BEHEMOTH

● Lake Van, Turkey: The "Mannheimer Morgen", in its July 27 issue (p.22) had a report by its Turkish correspondent Baha Güngör on the monster of Lake Van in Anatolia. You may remember that Peter Costello had already speculated in his book that Van may have a lake monster - so 'ere it comes: Last year many local Turks had observed a monster in Lake Van. There was great excitement, and the tabloid "Hürriyet" asked experts on their opinion and Turkish and foreign TV-crews didn't count costs to come to the lake. Lake Van in Anatolia is a salt-water lake, has 8600 squarekilometres, 1720 m above sea-level, up to 100 m deep, and a centre for tourists and fishermen. Witnesses reported in front of the cameras that the monster had reared its head out of the water, looking for victims. The semi-official news-agency Anatolia killed now, says the paper, the story, on July 26. At Edremit, a small village in Van province on the border to Iran, 14-year-old Semih Aliriz "solved" the mystery. "I heard at the beach that the monster had been seen again. I saw something move in the water, but this was no monster. I swam towards it and I was right - it was an air-filled mattress". Aliriz pulled the mattress ashore and became a celebrated hero, while police officials found the mattress was sieved with hundreds of gun balls which had been fired at the monster. The modern dragon slayer - killing a mattress. It is funny to see once more a typical fortune end for a mystery story: in 1990, hundreds of people see a monster. In 1991, a boy finds a floating mattress, which had been mistaken for a monster by some. Conclusion: the monster of 1990 was a mattress, too. The producer of this mattresses could promote his products referring to their ability to stay afloat for more than a year. I find such a mattress a monster in itself, but who cares? We got the solution! Similarly, we had an Australian movie by Brian Trenchard-Smith, 1985, on an Australian lake monster in our TV on July 24. This one (fictional) turned out to be an old mining machine.

● Lagarflót/Lögurinn, Iceland: This is one of the famous monsters, but all accounts of it refer to the material Baring Gould collected in the 19th century. I now have a story, or mention, of it in VID sem fljúgum - Icelandair Inflight Magazine, vol.1, 1990, p.24. The article says: "The Lagarfljót River runs by Egilsstaðir, a river to which many rumors and stories are attached. It is said that there is a huge worm-shaped animal in the river, but so far there exists no confirmation of it ever having been seen!" Oh...if no-one ever saw it, how come there are legends?

● Loch Ness: Sometime (June-July 91) the "Mannheimer Morgen" had a report by Klaus Kämpgen on "Project Urquhart", the newest attempt to get the monster. Neil Chalmers, director of the Museum of Natural History, said it was amazing how little we knew about the Loch. Even if the expedition didn't find Nessie, there would still be plenty of other mysterious water life remain to be discovered - like algae and worms. The project, co-sponsored by the Royal Scottish Society for Geography, will last four years and will include an accurate mapping of the lake bottom. The last large scientific exploration of the Loch was in 1908 (see results reprinted in Mackay's book), and Chalmers pointed out, "it is high time for a scientific exploration of Loch Ness which may enable us to understand and protect the lake". And Nick Witchell, BBC announcer, Nessie author and project member, commented: "We believe Loch Ness must finally be seriously investigated, not by publicity seekers, but by scientists. Project Urquhart doesn't believe in a monster, But there are some interesting observations which need explanation". The Neue Revue, a German tabloids specialized in pictures of naked women, had an article on Nessie in Nr. 25/ 1991, which I don't have but letters referring to the article were in Nr. 29, July 12, p.66, which I have. They refer to the book by Jipp, which I already mentioned in Bilk 38. I now have a copy; and the book is one of the useless ones, taking as sources on a collection of 60 press clippings about the Loch from 1960 - 90, many on the 1972-pix

and deepscan. Only of interest for those who collect everything. And with only 100 pp. with little or no new information, it is very expensive. (Karl-Ernst Jipp: NESSIE - Das Rätsel von Loch Ness. Stuttgart: Bertelsen Verlag 1989, 101pp, 23.80 DM).

● Venezuela: I have mentioned dinosaurs on the Auyan Tepui repeatedly in Bilk. Now, a new expedition, including biologist Armando Michelangeli and Uwe George was on the Tepui where Michelangeli had seen a dinosaur swimming in a lake and found three-toed footprints some time ago (a sighting by Laime Alexandro, a local farmer, was in Bilk some years ago). The expedition didn't catch a monster, but found a small lizard-like creature they thought might be its young (GEO Dec 90, pp. 14 - 37). Pity for the brave cryptozoologists: GEO Feb 90, p. 6, had a letter by Dr Andreas Schlüter, who identifies the young dinosaur as Neusticurus, a small lizard common in South America. Terra X, a German TV serial on secrets of lost civilizations, has also sponsored an expedition "to the table mountains of Venezuela, which may be the home of the last dinosaur." All reports on these table mountains stress its remoteness, but Bild, 22. - 27. July: airplane disaster as plane on a sightseeing trip for tourists crashes against Salto Angel on the Tepui: tourist flights, we learn, leave Venezuela each day to fly over the mountains.

ISIS:

● Nördlingen, Germany: CENAP Report, July and Aug 91, has a report on a German UFO sighting. Several people, in July 1984, saw a ball-like Ufo hovering over a field of cereals. A focus-like object opened like a window, and inside were "two strange creatures which looked like fish. They walked erect, but their bodies had jerky motions. Their heads and hands moved abruptly and they made a kind of 'nose kiss' like the eskimos." 30 seconds later, the focus closed again, and the ball, which had hieroglyphic inscription, vanished. CENAP identifies this one as a balloon - but ... this may only explain the trigger, and hardly the experience. But, once again, we note mermaid-like creatures piloting the spaceships.

KRAKEN:

● The German feature film of a movie taken of a giant octopus (see last Bilk) was rescheduled for June 26, but again - not screened.

USO:

● Barrier Islands, Florida: Allegedly, in 1978, Ed Walters was abducted by a USO off Florida. He went fishing in a boat, when he felt his canoe scatching over some metallic object under water. He then saw a series of bubbles approaching him. When the bubbles burst, it smelled like chlorine. They came from a mysterious green glow under water, which moved beneath his canoe. He lost his consciousness and awoke hours later - obviously abducted by an alien submarine. The report could be interesting were it not from a notorious hoaxer - Ed Walters of Gulf Breeze fame (see: UFOs - Es gibt sie. Droemer Knauer, Munich 1990, p. 355).

● Saguenay - Lake St John, Canada: In a report in Nature, reprinted in Science Frontiers and The Ley Hunter (114, p. 10) earthquake lights along the Saguenay River in Canada have been described. On an accompanying map, most of the lights, which often appeared very much like Ufos, were along the River - a river which is also famous for traditional and recent accounts of sea monster sightings (see Neurgers book, which has a whole chapter on the Saguenay - St Jons Lake system). Similarly, Loch-na-Sanaid close to Loch Ness (I have so far not been able to find it on a map) was a place where a lady saw many ghost lights in the 19th century (Inverness Courier, Feb 22, 1855)

BOOKS:

● 2 books by myself have just been published. One is called "Kontakte mit 'Außerirdischen' im deutschen Sprachraum", published by GEP, Postfach 2361, W-5880 Lüdenscheid, Germany (20 DM, ISBN: 3 - 923862 - 17 - 2). The second is called "Von Ufos entführt" published by C H Beck, Munich, ISBN 3 406 34054 7, 14.80 DM. Both are on sightings of Ufo creatures, one on Germany, one on American abductions. Please don't ask me for the books, I have only a limited supply. The first one may be ordered via the publisher, GEP, the second is by a large publisher and can be ordered in all book shops. See you. More -far more- news next issue.